REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-23 are pending in this Application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 7, 8, 12, 14-17, and 22 to define the claimed invention more particularly.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant has amended the claims to address the Examiner's concerns.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, and 14-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morley et al. (WO 99/59335) in view of Takamori (U.S. Pat. No. 5,287,186) and further in view of Duso et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,892,915, and hereinafter "Duso").

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention (e.g., as defined by exemplary claim 1) is directed to a digital content reproducing system.

The digital content reproducing system includes a movie company terminal which stores and manages a digital content of movies, a content delivery terminal in communication with the movie company terminal via a network, and a projecting system which is connected to the content delivery terminal via the network, receives the digital content from the content delivery terminal via the network, and reproduces the digital content to show a movie. The projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device that includes an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device directly to the video decoder of the backup reproducing device. The backup reproducing device starts processing the decoded digital content in synchronization with the predetermined signal when the

reproducing device stops sending the predetermined signal. The backup reproducing device starts the decoding when the backup reproducing device receives the predetermined signal.

In a conventional a conventional reproducing system used in a movie theater, as described in the Background of the present Application, movie images recorded or shot on a film are generally projected or shown on a screen. Also, a movie sound is reproduced through a loudspeaker by outputting audio data stored in, for example, a CD-ROM (e.g., see Application at page 1, lines 10-13).

This process can cause numerous defects and noises to occur by repetition of copying in an analog method and reproducing operations, since the content including images recorded on the films are degraded each time when the film or an original film is repeatedly copied (e.g., see Application at page 1, lines 22-25).

The claimed invention, however, provides a digital content reproducing system, wherein the projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit, while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device directly to the video decoder of to the backup reproducing device. The backup reproducing device starts the decoding when the backup reproducing device receives the predetermined signal (e.g., see Application at page 3, lines 1-11; page 10, lines 12-13; Figs. 6-7).

These features are important because with this arrangement, the reliability of all aspects of the content production, delivery, and presentation can be increased. The present invention also makes it easier to deal with the content and does not subject the content to the risk of degradation and/or damage (e.g., see Application at page 2, lines 3-8).

II. 35 U.S.C. 112, FIRST PARAGRAPH REJECTIONS

In rejecting claims 7 and 8, the Examiner alleges that the claim is indefinite for failing to particularly point out the invention.

Applicant amended claim 7 to recite, "*a first encrypting module which is connected to the mass memory unit and encrypts the video data received from the mass memory unit... a second encrypting module which is connected to the mass memory unit and encrypts the audio data received from the mass memory unit*," to define the claimed invention more particularly.

The amended claim reflects the embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 10 of the present Application.

Applicant also amended claim 8 to recite, "*The digital content reproducing system of claim 7, wherein the video signal output device supplies the decoded video signals to a projecting device, and wherein the audio signal output device supplies the decoded audio signals to an audio processor,*" to define the claimed invention more particularly.

The amended claim reflects the embodiment of the invention shown exemplarity in Fig. 10 and does not recite "an audio-visual input switching device".

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these rejections.

III. THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

In rejecting claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, and 14-23, the Examiner alleges that one of ordinary skill in the art would have combined Takamori with Duso and Morley et al. to render obvious the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that the references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and that, even if combined, the alleged combination of references would not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

That is, the alleged combination of Morley et al., Takamori, and Duso does not teach or suggest, "*the backup reproducing device starts the decoding when the backup reproducing device receives said first predetermined signal,*" (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22.

In rejecting independent claims 1, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22, the Examiner concedes that "*Morley et al. and Takamori does (sic) not specifically teach that the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device, to the backup reproducing device,*" (e.g. see Office Action at page 10, lines 14-17). The Examiner relies on Duse for teaching the backup producing device.

Duso teaches a heartbeat signal that conveys between a master controller server 29 and a slave server 28 (col. 50, lines 1-13; Fig. 2). Duse, however, teaches that the heartbeat signal is only for indicating whether or not the master controller server has any failure (col. 49, line 66 – col. 50, line 16). Duso, however, fails to teach or suggest that the heartbeat starts a decoding process, as claimed in the claimed invention.

On the contrary, in the claimed invention, the backup reproducing device starts the decoding process after receiving the predetermined signal, as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22.

The Examiner is referred to the flowchart in Fig. 7 of the present Application showing the reproducing device 203 sends the predetermined signal (TC) in step A2 to the backup reproducing device207, and then after receiving the predetermined signal, the backup reproducing device starts the decoding process in step A3 (e.g., see Application at page 10, lines 12-13).

Since the alleged servers of Duso start their operation independent of the alleged heartbeat, Duso fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention, which recites, "*the backup reproducing device starts the decoding when the backup reproducing device receives said first predetermined signal,*" (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that one with ordinary skills in the art would not have combined Morley et al. with the teachings of Takamori.

In rejecting independent claims 1, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22, the Examiner concedes that "*Morley et al. does not specifically disclose a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes the digital content supplied from a mass memory unit while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal,*" (e.g. see Office Action at page 9, lines 16-20). The Examiner relies on Takamori and Duso for teaching the backup producing device and sending the predetermined signal.

Applicant submits that Takamori teaches away from the claimed invention that recites, "*the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device, directly to the video decoder of the backup reproducing device,*" (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22.

Indeed, Takamori teaches that the self-diagnostic portions 9 supervise the operating status of the main and reserve blocks (see Office Action at page 10, lines 3-4; Takamori at col. 2, lines 26-49; Fig. 1). Therefore, the alleged video processing does not send a predetermined signal directly to the video processor of the alleged backup system, as recited in the claimed invention. Indeed, Takamori teaches applying the self-diagnostic external controller 9 to analyze the operation of the main and backup systems.

Applying an external controller to control the operation of the main and backup video processing system, based on the teachings of Takamori, teaches away from the claimed invention that recites, "*the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device, directly to the video decoder of the backup reproducing device*," (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22. Therefore, one with ordinary skills in the art would not have combined Morley et al. with the teachings of Takamori.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one with ordinary skills in the art would not have combined Morley et al. with Takamori and Duso, and even if combined, the alleged combination does not teach or suggest (or render obvious) each and every feature of the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

IV. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-10, 12, and 14-23, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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